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# Strong rise in employment and hours worked in October

Media Release

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**i** Source: [Labour Force, Australia, October 2020](#)

Seasonally adjusted employment increased by 178,800 people (1.4 per cent) between September and October and hours worked by 1.2 per cent according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

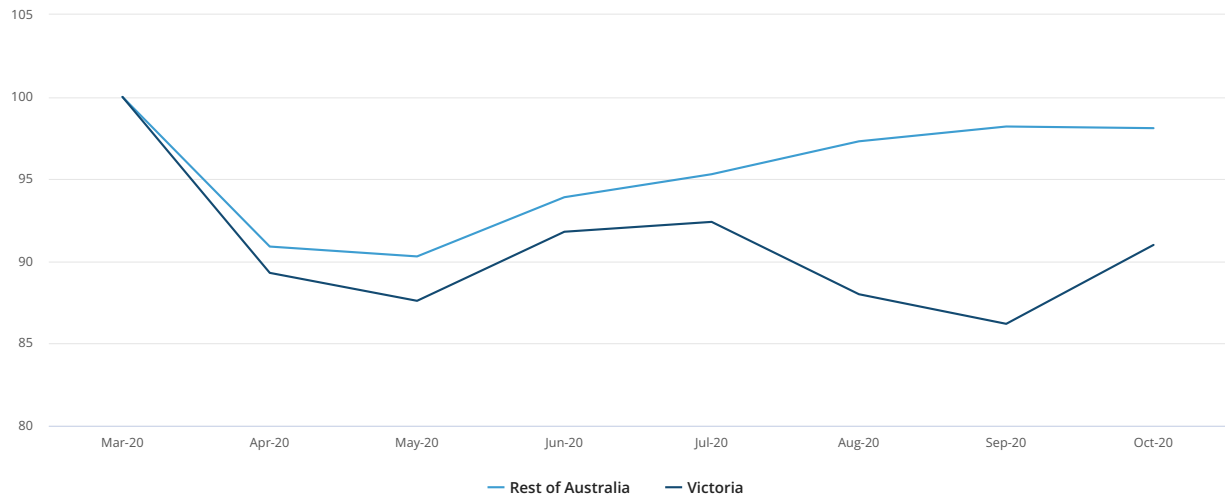
## Employment and hours worked

Bjorn Jarvis, head of Labour Statistics at the ABS, said: "This strong increase means that employment in October was only 1.7 per cent below March, and reflects a large flow of people from outside the labour force back into employment.

"Encouragingly, the rise in employment was also accompanied by a strong rise in hours worked, particularly in Victoria, where hours increased by 5.6 per cent."

Since starting to ease restrictions in October, Victoria's employment increased by 81,600 people (2.5 per cent). Employment and hours worked in Victoria remained 4.1 per cent and 9.0 per cent below March (compared to 1.7 per cent and 3.8 per cent for the rest of Australia).

## Hours worked index



Differences in employment continued to be seen between employees, for whom employment was 2.4 per cent lower than March, and non-employees, for whom employment was 1.2 per cent higher than March, in original terms.

### Unemployment and participation

Seasonally adjusted unemployment also increased in October (by 25,500 people) and the participation rate increased by 0.9 percentage points. The strong rise in participation resulted in a slight increase in the unemployment rate, rising 0.1 percentage points to 7.0 per cent.

“The number of people actively looking for work and who were available to start work increased in October,” Mr Jarvis said. “Coupled with a strong increase in employment, the participation rate increased by almost a whole percentage point in October to be just 0.1 percentage points below March. ”

The Victorian participation rate increased 2.0 percentage points in October and was 1.4

percentage points below March. The Victorian unemployment rate increased by 0.7 percentage points to 7.4 per cent.

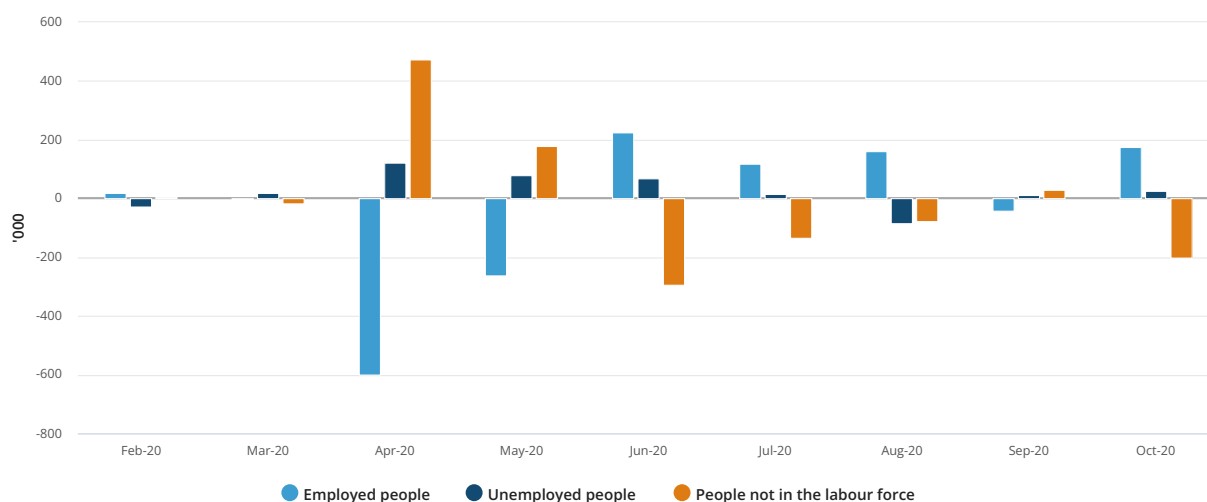
The youth (15-24 year olds) participation rate increased 2.2 percentage points to 68.2 per cent, which was also just 0.1 percentage points less than in March. The youth unemployment rate increased by 1.0 percentage point (to 15.6 per cent), alongside strong employment growth for youth (36,700 people).

### Underutilisation

The underemployment rate decreased 1.0 percentage point to 10.4 per cent, 3.4 percentage points below its peak in April 2020.

The underutilisation rate, which combines the unemployment and underemployment rates, fell 0.9 percentage points to 17.4 per cent, 2.8 percentage points below its peak in May 2020.

## Monthly changes in key labour populations, Australia



Today's release includes [additional analysis of hours worked \(/articles/insights-hours-worked-october-2020\)](/articles/insights-hours-worked-october-2020), including for those people working zero hours, analysis of employment and hours for the states and territories.

More details are in the October 2020 issue of [Labour Force, Australia \(/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/oct-2020\)](/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/oct-2020). Further information, including regional labour market information, will be available in the upcoming October 2020 issue of [Labour Force, Australia, Detailed \(/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed/latest-release\)](/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed/latest-release), due for release on 26 November 2020.

The ABS would like to thank Australians for their continued support in responding to our surveys during such a difficult time.

## Media notes

- People in the Labour Force are either employed, or unemployed. In order to be unemployed, people must be actively looking for work, and available to start work during the reference week.
- 'Non-employees' includes owner managers of incorporated enterprises, owner managers of unincorporated enterprises and contributing family workers. Most non-employees are outside the scope of Single Touch Payroll and Weekly Payroll Jobs and Wages statistics.
- The ABS has suspended publishing trend series for the COVID-19 period.
- Further information on additional labour market statistics can be found in [Measuring the labour market impacts of COVID-19 \(https://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/D3310114.nsf/home/Measuring%20Labour%20Market%20COVID19\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/D3310114.nsf/home/Measuring%20Labour%20Market%20COVID19); part of the suite of information available on the ABS website.
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